



PRESS RELEASE

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Bamiyan Hosts First International Tourism Investment Conference

BAMYAN, AFGHANISTAN | MAY 28, 2011 — The Bamiyan Provincial Government recently hosted the first-ever Bamiyan Tourism Investment Conference. The three-day event introduced more than 65 potential investors from Afghanistan, Austria, Costa Rica, Japan, Kenya, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States to Bamiyan's potential as a tourist destination. USAID, the Bamiyan Provincial Reconstruction Team, the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, the Aga Khan Foundation, the U.N. Environment Programme, and the Wildlife Conservation Society provided additional funding and logistical support for the conference.

"This was a highly successful opportunity for the international investment community to see this extraordinarily beautiful province. The early birds who made it to this first investment conference were clearly impressed by Bamiyan's potential," said Embassy Director of Public Diplomacy David Ensor.

A traditional stop on the historic Silk Road connecting China and western Asia, Bamiyan possesses many archeological sites visited by historical figures such as Genghis Khan. Additionally, the province enjoys exceptional natural beauty, perfect for trekking and skiing.

The conference opened with visits to three of Bamiyan's most notable sites and potential tourist destinations, including the World Heritage Buddhas. The second and third days featured presentations about the province's current developments in tourism and opportunities for investment from senior Afghan and U.S. Government representatives, private-sector stakeholders, and tourism industry development experts.

Speaking at the conference, Bamiyan Provincial Governor Habiba Sarabi emphasized the potential of the tourism industry as a driver of economic growth. She said, "Tourism development will provide sustainable income for Bamiyan's citizens."

Bamiyan Province was the first stop of a three-stop tourism investment event. The investors will receive a similar introduction to opportunities in Kabul and Panjsher Province before the event concludes on May 29.

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